WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Harry E. Mitchell and a bipartisan majority of the U.S. House of Representatives took a critical step tonight towards making America less dependent on foreign oil by passing a comprehensive energy package that expands domestic offshore drilling and invests in alternative energy sources. H.R. 6899, The Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Production Act, passed the House tonight by a bipartisan vote of 236 to 189.

“At a time when Arizona’s families are paying record high prices at the pump and our economy is struggling, we can’t afford to continue with a failed energy policy that has increased our dependence on foreign oil,” said Mitchell. “As I’ve said before, I believe we need a comprehensive approach to address our energy crisis, and this package provides for increased domestic energy production by expanding offshore drilling and invests in alternative sources of energy, such as extending key solar energy tax credits. This bill is a critical step towards energy independence.”

The Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Production Act:

- Expands domestic drilling by lifting the federal moratorium on offshore drilling and allowing coastal states to drill.
- Invests significantly in alternative energy production, research, and use.
- Extends critical solar investment tax credit for eight years.
- Raises the Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) by requiring electricity providers to produce at least 15 percent of electricity from renewable sources by 2020.
- Establishes ethics rules for the for the Department of Interior’s Mineral Management Service in response to recent reports of illegal and unethical behavior.

Mitchell also joined with Republican and Democratic colleagues in cosponsoring H.R. 6709, The National Conservation, Environment and Energy Independence Act. This legislation was crafted by the House Energy Working Group, a bipartisan coalition of members of the U.S. House of Representatives tasked with drafting a comprehensive energy plan to address America's energy needs.